# Preparing for registration: Group 3 service providers Funded by TAC/WorkSafe Victoria

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## What’s in this pack

1. About the Scheme
2. About the Standards
3. Getting ready to register
4. Ongoing compliance and pilot

## Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

We would like to begin by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we are meeting today

I pay my respects to Elders past and present, and to all the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are joining us today.

## Snapshot of the new Social Services Regulatory scheme

The Scheme started on 1 July 2024

It established a single **regulator** that is **independent** from the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing.

The new Social Services Regulator covers:

* Registration
* Social Service Standards and Child Safe Standards
* Worker and Carer Exclusion Scheme

The Regulator has a comprehensive regulatory toolkit and fit-for purpose **incident reporting** to effectively support **compliance and enforcement.**

It also has information sharing agreements and other provisions to reduce regulatory burden.

## About the Social Services Regulator

### The Scheme

We are an independent statutory authority established under the [Social Services Regulation Act 2021](https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/as-made/acts/social-services-regulation-act-2021).

The Act establishes a new framework for social services regulation in Victoria. The Act and the [Social Services Regulations 2023](https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/statutory-rules/social-services-regulations-2023/001) began on 1 July 2024.

Services covered by the new laws must:

* register
* demonstrate they meet the 6 Social Service Standards
* meet ongoing requirements

## Registration is a staged process

### Registration timeframes

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Social service** | **Group** | **Registration window opens** |
| Community-based child and family services registered under the Children Youth and Families Act 2005 | 1 | Automatically registered: 1 July 2024 |
| Secure welfare services and community services provided by DFFH and created under section 44 of the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 | 1 | Automatically registered: 1 July 2024 |
| Supported residential services | 1 | Automatically registered: 1 July 2024 |
| Disability services registered under the Disability Act 2006 | 1 | Automatically registered: 1 July 2024 |
| Social services provided by DFFH, other than secure welfare services (such as child protection, forensic disability and Family Safety Victoria’s activities) | 1 | 1 to 31 July 2024 |
| Family violence services funded by DFFH | 2 | 1 August to 30 September 2024 |
| Homelessness services funded by DFFH | 2 | 1 October to 31 December 2024 |
| Sexual assault support services funded by DFFH | 3 | 1 April to 30 June 2025 |

## Registering with the Regulator

Prior to 1 July 2024:

* many service providers were subject to overlapping regulatory schemes
* fragmented social services system created barriers to effective risk management
* some services were not formally regulated, and instead had safety standards embedded in funding contracts

With registration:

* Protecting service users by identifying and reducing risks as much as possible before service delivery
* Supporting a level playing field for social service providers
* Creating a registration profile with key details about operations that can be updated directly
* Improving public confidence in the expertise and reputation of registered providers

### Questions we’ve heard about registration

* When can I begin the process – I’m ready to start it now
* What information do I need to provide in a registration application?
* What about providers who may not want to register, or are unaware they need to?
* Why are the ‘goalposts’ moving with registration?

We’ll address these questions in further detail in the webinar.

## Compliance requirements

This section will cover meeting requirements and will include:

* The Social Service Standards
* The Child Safe Standards
* How we monitor the Standards

### Social Service Standards

A consistent set of obligations that all registered social service providers in Victoria must meet.

Standard 1: Safe service delivery – Social services are safely provided based on assessed needs.

 Standard 2: Service user agency & dignity – Social services are person-centred, and respect and uphold service user rights and agency.

Standard 3: Safe service environments – Social services are provided in a safe, secure and fit‑for‑purpose environment.

Standard 4: Feedback and complaints – Service users are supported to share feedback, complaints or concerns about service safety.

Standard 5: Accountable organisational governance – Effective governance and organisational systems support safe social service delivery.

Standard 6: Safe workforce – Social services are delivered by a workforce with the knowledge, capability and support to provide safe social services with care and skill.

[Find out more about the 6 Social Services Standards](https://www.vic.gov.au/social-services-regulator-social-services-standards)

### Supporting providers to get ready to meet the Standards

#### Guidance materials online

* Checklists to get ready
* Outcomes: each Standard aims to achieve key outcomes
* Service requirements: actions you take to meet an outcome and a Standard
* Indicators of success to show ongoing compliance with a Standard

[**Find out more about the social services standards and service requirements**](https://www.vic.gov.au/social-services-regulator-social-services-standards)

#### Summary: how to meet a Standard

* Service providers need to meet ALL service requirements in a Standard to meet the Standard
* There are multiple service requirements in every Standard
* Each Standard aims to meet several outcomes
* Build in practices and procedures to demonstrate ongoing compliance

[**Find out more about the social services standards and service requirements**](https://www.vic.gov.au/social-services-regulator-social-services-standards)

## Meeting the Child Safe Standards

### Some organisations must meet the Child Safe Standards

### Organisations and businesses in scope of the *Child* *Wellbeing* *and* *Safety* *Act* *2005* must meet each Child Safe Standard

* This includes organisations that provide or facilitate services for children (for some or all of their services)
* Sole traders also need to meet the Child Safe Standards if they have engaged a contractor / employee / volunteer to provide services, facilities or goods

We regulate the Child Safe Standards in **social** **services.** The Child Safe Standards are not voluntary.There can be legal consequences for non-compliance.

There are multiple regulators of the Child Safe Standards: you may have multiple reporting requirements.

[Find out more about the Child Safe Standards](https://www.vic.gov.au/changes-regulation-child-safe-standards)

## There are 11 Child Safe Standards

* Culturally safe
* Safety and wellbeing is embedded
* Empowered about rights and participation
* Informed and involved families and communities
* Equity and diversity needs are respected
* Suitable and supported people working with children
* Child-centred complaint process
* Well-equipped staff and volunteers
* Safe environments, including online
* Implementation and review
* Safety policies and procedures

[Find out more about the Child Safe Standards](https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/the-11-child-safe-standards/)

## Regulatory approach

The Regulator makes decisions using:

* an intelligence-led and integrated approach
* a proportionate approach to risk
* objectivity and openness in our processes
* procedural fairness
* resources where they have the greatest effect

We take a graduated approach to regulating the new laws:

* Our initial focus is on informing and educating organisations about their obligations under the new Standards
* For some organisations, it may take time and effort to get things right and they may not have fully completed implementation
* Over time, we expect organisations comprehensively comply with requirements of the laws

[Find out more about the Social Services Regulator’s approach to regulation](https://www.vic.gov.au/social-services-regulators-approach-regulation)

## Getting ready to register

### What you need to know about registering

Key registration focus areas:

1. Timing for Group 3 registration:
* Pilot period begins April
* Invitation to register starts from May

We review completed applications within 60 days

1. Contact

We’ll contact providers as soon as possible via email

* It’s the responsibility of in-scope providers to register
* If you haven’t heard from us by 30 June, let us know
1. Information

We’ll ask you to upload documents directly to build a registration profile

* This provides information we need to make an assessment
* Topics include key personnel, premises, operations etc
1. Improvement
* We’ve used different interim systems before the roll-out of a new ICT system
* We’ll test a new system in pilot before Group 3 registration
* Each time we update a process we are looking to improve it!

## Am I in scope for Group 3 registration?

If you deliver:

* disability services funded by TAC or WorkSafe, and
* were providing these services prior to 1 July 2024

You must register to continue providing these services

However:

* disability services *not* funded by DFFH, TAC or WorkSafe Victoria are not in scope
* It is not necessary to register or meet the Social Services
* even single operators or small providers need to register their services if they are in scope

There is no cost for registration.

## Registration looks different for some providers

Are you a new provider?

* Began receiving funding after 1 July 2024, or
* Didn’t receive funding in the three months leading up to 1 July 2024,
* Didn’t deliver funded disability services in the three months prior to 1 July 2024.

Then you have a different registration process

* You’ll have a different process in your registration application
* This means you’ll need to provide more information about your people, premises and governance operations

Contact us to begin

* Email us to start your registration
* Between 1 April and 30 June contact us at registration@ssr.vic.gov.au

Previously, service providers had to meet different requirements under different Victorian laws.

[Find out more about registering with the Social Services Regulator](https://www.vic.gov.au/social-services-regulator-registration).

## Registration is different if you provide multiple services

Already registered:

Some service providers may have already registered other social services they deliver

* This is if you also provide social services in Group 1 or Group 2
* Services in Group 1 were registered on 1 July 2024, while services in Group 2 are being registered in stages up to 31 March 2025

Adding services:

* For providers who have already registered, you’ll need to add to your existing registration profile
* This means you need to add disability services funded by TAC or WorkSafe to your registration

## **Stages** **of** **the** **registration** **process:** What at the process looks like

### Overview: getting ready to test the registration process

* 1. We’re building a new **ICT** **system** to hold information securely and provide you with portal access. We’re seeking nominations to participate in this pilot period in April. Email **transition@ssr.vic.gov.au**
	2. This means we ask for the specific information we need to assess a registration application
	3. We will ask you for less information than a full registration through this streamlined process
	4. We are on track to begin contacting Group 3 providers to register – from May
	5. We’ll test the process of using and engaging with the new ICT system in April

### How we’ll contact you to begin registration

#### We email providers:

We will email the CEO of a service provider. This email begins your engagement in the registration process

#### Authority to complete

The CEO has the authority to complete the service provider’s registration application

#### Option to delegate

If the CEO wishes to delegate to another staff member, there is a function to delegate this once you have created
a Portal account

We’ll contact providers as soon as possible – it is not necessary to email us to begin.

### Creating a Portal Account and getting started

* 1. Create a Portal Account

After you click the link we send you:

* Enter your email address and create a password
* Go through the process of verifying your email address is correct
* After verification you can add your user details
	1. Create provider profile

Then you can complete a form to begin building your provider profile. You can save it as you go and return to complete it.

* 1. Scope check

Confirm the services you deliver are in scope of the Regulator

* We review completed provider profiles
* Part of that review is confirming that the services you provide are in scope of the Regulator
	1. Apply for registration

Then you’ll be able to start a registration application

* You can save your progress and return to complete it

### Summary: setting up portal access and starting your application

Accessing a Portal account to complete your registration application covers:

What we send you in one email:

* A link to the portal to begin your registration application and build your registration profile
* An instruction guide on how to create an account, build a profile and navigate the system

How you’ll complete your application

* Once you’ve set up portal access and provider profile, you can begin your registration application
* The system will prompt you to upload documents to demonstrate your provider’s suitability to provide social services
* There are links to guidance materials to help your preparation

Attesting you understand the Standards

* Your CEO (or equivalent) will need to confirm the service provider understands requirements under the Standards

[Our guidance documents on the 6 Social Services](https://www.vic.gov.au/social-services-regulator-social-services-standards)

## Anticipated timing: what it looks like

### April to May: getting ready:

Documentation you’ll need to complete your registration application includes information covering:

* Your people
* Your premises
* Governance/operations

### May to June: Access the system

* Start building your registration profile
* Provide information for your registration application

### June onwards: start your profile

* Upload documents requested
* You can only submit a completed registration application
* We’ll contact you if the information submitted is not sufficient

Review and finalisation:

* We review and assess completed registration applications within 60 days
* Your registration will not necessarily be finalised before 30 June
* We email you to let you know the outcome

[Find out more about registering with the Social Services Regulator](https://www.vic.gov.au/social-services-regulator-registration)

## Summary: Group 3 registration process

* 1. Group 3’s dedicated registration period takes place over May to June
* Group 3 service providers need to begin registration application process during this time
	1. The Regulator will email Group 3 providers about starting the registration application process during this period
* Once you create a Portal Account, you’ll be able to begin and complete your registration application
	1. Contact us if you are in Group 3 and do not receive an email by 30 June 2025 on mailto:registration@ssr.vic.gov.au
* Once we have assessed a completed application – we contact the provider to let them know the outcome

## What can service providers do now?

1. Confirm the registration group you are in
* [Who is covered by the new laws](https://www.vic.gov.au/services-scope-new-scheme)
* [Registration groups](https://www.vic.gov.au/social-services-regulator-registration)
1. [Subscribe to get the latest updates, sector guidance, news and event details from the Regulator](https://confirmsubscription.com/h/y/1614A62FF102A239)
2. Review the Regulator’s Guidance
* [6 Social Service Standards information sheets](https://www.vic.gov.au/social-services-regulator-social-services-standards)
* [Preparing to register – Group 3](https://www.vic.gov.au/social-services-regulator-registration)
* [Demonstration suitability in the registration process](https://www.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-08/Suitability-requirements-fact-sheet.docx)
1. Review the Regulator’s information about our approach
* [Overview of the new laws](https://www.vic.gov.au/changes-regulation-social-services) and [comparison documents](https://www.vic.gov.au/comparing-social-services-standards-other-standards)
* Our principles and [approach to regulation](https://www.vic.gov.au/social-services-regulators-approach-regulation)

## Registration recap – our pilot process

### Timing

* Pilot period for registration is in April
* Invitation to register begins from May

### Contact

* We contact providers as soon as possible via email
* If you haven’t heard from us by 30 June, let us know

### Information

* You’ll upload examples directly to complete your application and build a registration profile
* This provides information we need to make an assessment

### Improvement

* Our new ICT system will be tested in a pilot to make the process as easy as possible

There is guidance material on our website to help you start getting ready and understand your legislative obligations: [ssr.vic.gov.au](https://www.vic.gov.au/social-services-regulators-approach-regulation)

### What we’ll test in a pilot period in April

* The key pieces of information we need to assess a provider’s suitability and understanding of prompts and questions
* Documentation that demonstrates core governance and operational systems – for registration and ongoing compliance
* Key areas of usability including navigation, ease of use, look and feel
* The minimum details we need to build a registration profile for a TAC-WorkSafe funded provider

### How we’ll test

* We’ll test the new ICT system with a sample of providers in April
* This includes providing access to a prototype process in our ICT system
* We’ll consolidate learnings on how to adjust the system to build in further usability
* We’ll begin contacting Group 3 providers in May to request information that will be uploaded into this new system

### Getting in touch about participating in piloting our new ICT system

* Participating in the pilot means you’ll get to complete your registration application in April and May
* We will adapt our guidance and information material to further streamline the process
* We will work closely with you to understand your experiences about navigating the system and what is required
* We value pilot feedback about how easy the system is to use and understand – this does not reflect negatively on your registration application

### Expressing interest in the pilot period in April

* You’ll need to be available over a 2-week period
* And have documentation about your people, premises and operations ready to share
* Let us know if you are a small, medium or large provider so we test with a mix of sizes

Email**transition@ssr.vic.gov.au**to express interest by 11 April

## Ongoing compliance requirements for all registered providers

### Ongoing requirements

* Ongoing practices and procedures to meet service requirements in the six Social Service Standards. See: [**about the Standards**](https://www.vic.gov.au/social-services-regulator-social-services-standards).
* Meeting the Child Safe Standards (if applicable). Some providers already have practices in place to meet these requirements. See: [**about the Child Safe Standards**](https://www.vic.gov.au/changes-regulation-child-safe-standards).
* Complying with other registration requirements. [**Suitability requirements**](https://www.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-01/Information-Sheet-%E2%80%93-Suitability-requirements.docx).
* Reporting incidents which occur during service delivery. See: [**reporting a notifiable incident**](https://www.vic.gov.au/ssr-reporting-notifiable-incident).
* Reporting changes to operations and organisation. See: [**how to report these changes**](https://www.vic.gov.au/reporting-changes-your-organisation).
* Registered providers do not need to renew registration. It will continue unless cancelled by the Regulator.

## More information

**For more information, start with our** [**website**](https://www.vic.gov.au/social-services-regulators-approach-regulation)

[For more information about registration](https://www.vic.gov.au/social-services-regulator-registration)

For enquiries about registration email: registration@ssr.vic.gov.au

[About the Standards](https://www.vic.gov.au/social-services-regulator-social-services-standards)